The Rise and fall of professional social work in Japan: Evolution, devolution and neo-liberal turn?

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The rise and fall of professional social work in Japan: Evolution, devolution and neo-liberal turn?
1. An overview of specific features of the social welfare and social work in Japan since modernization

The prewar period [1868-1945]

While Japan was undergoing dramatic changes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the social welfare and social work sector was also experiencing significant transformations. The rapid modernization and industrialization that took place in this period had a profound impact on the lives of the Japanese population. The government sought to address the social problems that arose from these changes through various social welfare initiatives.

This period saw the establishment of various social welfare organizations and the development of social work as a profession. These efforts were aimed at improving the living conditions of the working class and addressing issues such as poverty, health, and education. However, the overreach of the state and the lack of genuine concern for the welfare of the people led to a series of social issues and conflicts.

In the postwar period, the social welfare and social work sector continued to evolve, adapting to the new political and economic landscape. The role of the state in providing social welfare services expanded, and social work became more focused on addressing the needs of the individual and promoting social justice.

Despite the challenges faced during this period, there were also notable successes in advancing social welfare and social work in Japan. The sector has continued to grow and adapt, responding to the changing needs of society.
The post war period [1945-1973]

The post war period [1945-1973] saw a rapid economic and social transformation in Japan. The country was in ruins after the war and faced significant challenges, including poverty, destitution, unemployment, and child abuse. The government, therefore, prioritized social work and state welfare, which aimed to provide support to vulnerable groups and promote social cohesion. This period marked a shift in social policy, as traditional mutual aid gave way to more formalized social work practices. The government implemented various initiatives, including small state grants, to address these issues and support the community. The post war period was a time of transformation and adaptation, as Japan worked to rebuild and establish a new social order.
After the Oil-Shock in the mid of 1970s

The rapid growth of the Japanese economy in the post-war period had led to a widespread belief in the effectiveness of the economic system. However, the effects of the oil crisis in 1973 and 1974 led to a period of economic stagnation. The government responded with a new constitution, which prioritized social security and social work as the state responsibility. High economic growth, with full employment and family wage, was also a secondary priority. The abolition of top administrators and militarism was also a top priority.

GHQ (General Head Quarters)
PHW (Public Health and Welfare)
(Dealers)

Democratisation
abolishment of top administrators
militarism
Zaibatsu

New Constitution
New legislations in the fields of social security and social welfare
the state responsibility of social welfare and social work
(first priority)
High Economic Growth
(full employment and family wage)
(secondary status)
The end of high economic growth by the oil shock

big social change (Aging)

the government

New accumulation and new industries

Restructuring state welfare (welfare backrush)

Japanese Styled Welfare Society as ideology (Not the welfare state)

mutual helps

But faced with difficulties as to staff recruitment (social workers and careworkers)
2 The rise and fall of professional social workers in Japan

The development of the social workers' movement

As the modernisation of the society progressed, the social workers' movement also evolved. The movement faced numerous challenges, including socio-economic transformations, political changes, and changing social norms. These factors played a significant role in shaping the development of the social workers' movement in Japan. The movement was characterised by a series of struggles and battles against discriminatory practices and policies. Despite the challenges, the social workers' movement continued to evolve, adapting to the changing social and economic conditions.

The movement began to take shape in the early 20th century, with the formation of the first social work organisations. These organisations were primarily focused on addressing the needs of the poor and marginalised communities. The movement gained momentum as more social workers became involved in advocating for the rights of these communities. The movement also gained support from the government and other organisations, which helped to expand its reach.

However, the movement faced several setbacks, including opposition from conservative forces who were against the idea of social work. These forces argued that social work was a threat to traditional values and practices. Despite these challenges, the movement continued to grow, with more social workers joining the cause.

The movement reached its peak in the 1960s, with the formation of the Japan Social Work Association. The association played a crucial role in providing a platform for social workers to advocate for their causes. The association also helped to standardise the practice of social work, ensuring that it was based on scientific principles.

In the 1970s, the movement faced a decline, with the rise of new social issues and challenges. The movement had to adapt to these changes, shifting its focus to new areas. The movement also faced criticism from some quarters who felt that it was too focused on the needs of the poor and marginalised communities.

Despite the challenges, the social workers' movement continued to evolve, with more social workers becoming involved in the cause. The movement also gained support from the government, which helped to expand its reach.

Today, the social workers' movement continues to be an important force in Japan, with social workers advocating for the rights of vulnerable communities. The movement is focused on addressing new social issues, such as social inequality, poverty, and environmental issues. The movement continues to evolve, adapting to the changing social and economic conditions.
The position of 'certified' social worker as the result of compromise
had been missing: the essential deference between the fact 'what is the nature of social worker' and 'what 'certified' social workers should do as professionals'.

3 The neoliberal workfare policy as a political rhetoric and its relationship with social work practice: the symbolic obligation of 'new' social work?
Neo-liberalism and restructuring the state welfare

Neo-liberalism is an economic and political ideology that emphasizes free markets, limited government intervention, and individual freedom. It emerged in the late 20th century as a reaction against the welfare state that was developed in the mid-20th century. The state welfare system, which provides social services and support, has been criticized for being too large and too expensive. Neo-liberals argue that the state should play a smaller role in the economy and that individuals should be responsible for their own well-being.

The restructuring of the state welfare system involves reducing government spending and implementing market-based reforms. These reforms include privatization, reducing taxes, and decreasing the size of the public sector. The goal is to create a more efficient and sustainable system that can better adapt to changes in the economy. 

However, some argue that these reforms have led to increased inequality and social injustice. Critics claim that the emphasis on individual responsibility and market mechanisms has failed to provide adequate support for those in need. The debate over the role of the state in providing welfare continues, with some advocating for a more robust welfare system and others supporting the principles of neo-liberalism.
The introduction of workfare policy to the non-laborers as rhetoric: the political implication of 'neo-liberal' workfare policy and social work

The increase in social expenditure on workfare policy has been a subject of scholarly and political discussion. The necessity of workfare policy has been argued as a requirement for social welfare and economic development. However, the implementation of workfare policy has been debated as a means to reduce welfare dependency and encourage social self-reliance. The political implications of workfare policy have been analyzed in various contexts, including the political ideology of neo-liberalism and the social structure of the welfare state. The introduction of workfare policy to the non-laborers as rhetoric has been discussed as a strategy to address social welfare issues and to promote social self-reliance.

The political implications of workfare policy have been a subject of scholarly and political debate. The necessity of workfare policy has been argued as a requirement for social welfare and economic development. However, the implementation of workfare policy has been debated as a means to reduce welfare dependency and encourage social self-reliance. The political implications of workfare policy have been analyzed in various contexts, including the political ideology of neo-liberalism and the social structure of the welfare state. The introduction of workfare policy to the non-laborers as rhetoric has been discussed as a strategy to address social welfare issues and to promote social self-reliance.
The emergence of educational confusions in social work

Educational confusions in social work can arise due to various factors. These factors can be categorized into three main groups: intellectual, emotional, and environmental. The intellectual factor includes cognitive dissonance, which occurs when the individual's beliefs and actions are inconsistent. Emotional factors refer to the emotional stress that individuals may experience due to the demands of social work. Environmental factors are the broader context in which social workers operate, including institutional norms, organizational culture, and societal expectations.

In order to address these confusions, social workers need to engage in self-reflection and professional development. This includes critically examining their own beliefs and values, as well as seeking feedback from colleagues and mentors. Additionally, social workers should strive to create a supportive work environment where they feel valued and respected.

By addressing these confusions, social workers can become more effective in their practice and better equipped to serve their clients.
The allocation of social services within the service resources and
the budget. The objective is to provide a summary of the budget and its implications. The budget aims to balance the needs of various sectors and adjust the distribution of resources accordingly. It is crucial for policymakers to ensure that the budget reflects the priorities and needs of the population. The budget process involves several stages, including preparation, deliberation, and implementation. Each stage is designed to ensure transparency and accountability in the allocation of resources. The budget also takes into account the economic conditions and forecasts for the future. It is important to monitor the budget's implementation and evaluate its impact on different sectors, as well as to adapt it to changing circumstances.

Summary and concluding remarks

In conclusion, the budget is a critical tool for managing government finances and ensuring that resources are allocated efficiently. It is essential for decision-makers to consider the implications of the budget on the economy and society as a whole. The budget should be reviewed and revised periodically to reflect changes in economic conditions and to address emerging challenges. The budget process should involve a participatory approach, allowing stakeholders to contribute to the decision-making process. This will ensure that the budget reflects the interests and needs of the population and contributes to sustainable development. The budget should also be transparent and accountable, allowing for public scrutiny and feedback. By implementing a well-structured budget process, policymakers can ensure that the budget serves as a tool for achieving the broader goals of the country.
government

out sourcing services

some workers are critical

gate-keeper vs autonomous social worker

‘the certified’ social worker

contract out

but state regulation

promoting social status of social workers?

various NPO activities

critical

negative feelings

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